



Elevating the Role of Senior Corps in Disasters

Corporation for National and Community Service



needed during the disaster response. Whether in an EOC, local call center for disaster survivors or in agencies and departments within the community, additional support is needed to handle the surge of activity after a disaster.

Senior Corps volunteers are able to draw on their previous experience to supplement and support local agencies. From basic administrative support to complex roles, such as subject matter experts (i.e. engineers, public information officers, planners), roles for volunteers can be dependent on the disaster response.

Emotional and Spiritual Care

Additional support to disaster survivors can be delivered through emotional and spiritual care. Specialized VOADS, as well as local religious and counseling services, may provide these types of services. Demand for these types of services can be high in disasters where fatalities are involved.

For example, these VOADS and local organizations may provide emotional and spiritual care in a group setting such as a shelter or Disaster Recovery Center. Senior Corps volunteers could support these organizations by providing logistical and administrative support for their activities. Note that Senior Corps grantees must abide by all grant terms and conditions, including refraining from prohibited activities such as inherently religious activities, even in times of disaster. (See the box on the right for more information.)

CNCS Funds and Religious Activities

National service participants and project staff funded by CNCS may not give religious instruction, conduct worship services or engage in any form of proselytization as part of his or her duties. (45 CFR 2551.121(g), 45 CFR 2552.121(g), 45 CFR 2553.91(g))

This does not preclude Senior Corps volunteers or grant-funded staff from assisting with care though activities such as helping to organize non-denominational counseling sessions.

Direct Services

Other direct services to the community can be provided. Senior Corps programs have engaged in:

- Sandbagging operations
- Home weatherization
- Ramp/Access repair
- Debris Removal

Additional Disaster Support

Additional support can be provided as determined by the needs of the community after a disaster. Depending on the resources, capability and capacity of the Senior Corps program, other areas of disaster engagement are possible. This work can be done as a part of an agreement with a local jurisdiction, state or in coordination with another organization.